



# FRANCE

## “ Is France turning its back on ODA? ”

COORDINATION SUD

### Main trends

After a positive year in 2022, 2023 marked a downturn. ODA decreased to 0.50% of GNI, falling short of the national objective of 0.55% established by law. France also postponed its target of reaching 0.7% ODA to 2030, five years later than planned. This negative trend continued into 2024, with the government cutting the annual ODA budget by 13%. Further reductions are anticipated in 2024 and 2025.

Over the past year, the government has shifted its approach to emphasise that ODA will now also serve France's national interests. This includes potentially more support for national companies and aligning development cooperation policies with diplomatic strategies. Such changes have sparked concerns about a potential decline in ODA effectiveness.

As part of this new policy, France suspended its ODA (other than humanitarian aid) in two countries in 2023, Niger and Burkina Faso, halting funding for several CSO-led development projects. Additionally, the French government has started to avoid the term "official development assistance" in its communications, preferring to use "social and sustainable investments".

### Government's relationship with civil society

French law on development cooperation recognises the roles and expertise of CSOs, mandating that the government involve CSOs in drafting and implementing development and humanitarian initiatives. CSOs engage in regular dialogue with the government, primarily through the multi-stakeholder Council on development cooperation (CNDSI), which convenes four times a year under the chairmanship of the Secretary of State or the Minister.

Reported ODA: EUR 13533.9 million

**0.50%** GNI (↓ from 0.56% in 2022)

Non-inflated ODA: EUR 10567.6 million

**0.39%** GNI (↓ from 0.40% in 2022)

Total inflated ODA: EUR 2966.4 million

**22%** of total



When reviewing or renewing a strategy, the MFA typically organises consultations with CSOs. However, the quality of these consultations varies significantly. CSOs often express concerns about a lack of transparency and accountability, and the insufficient implementation of their recommendations.

In recent years, relations have been affected by new regulations that restrict the enabling environment for CSOs. These include the mandatory signing of a republican commitment contract and the gradual implementation of rules requiring CSOs to screen their beneficiaries during operations.

### The French government should:

- **Improve continuity and coherence in national and international commitments**
  - It is crucial that the government realigns with its commitments and gets back on track to achieve the 0.7% goal. France already has key instruments to fund ODA such as the tax on financial transactions and the tax on airline tickets. If they were to be improved and strengthened, they could support the increase of ODA.
- **Clarify France's position on avoiding conditionality and instrumentalisation of ODA for national commercial and diplomatic purposes** - the Government should reaffirm its commitment to act in favour of marginalised peoples' interests through its development cooperation policy and should exclude activities that do not benefit them.



- **Maintain commitments towards civil society** - the law on development cooperation set a target to reach the OECD DAC's average for CSO funding of about 15% of bilateral ODA. This target should be politically reaffirmed and reflected in increased funding in the coming years, starting from 2025.
- **Secure funding for key priorities defined by France's Development Cooperation Law** - Key priorities include supporting the LDCs, social services, and gender equality. The latter should include long-term funding commitments to the Fund for feminist organisations (FSOF). Redressing the balance between grants and loans should remain a priority to ensure funding for projects in fragile countries, extending access to essential services.

Links - [Welcome pack for MPs](#) (July 2024, in French). [Position paper on aid instrumentalisation](#) (April 2024, in French).